

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry "documentary" days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Pre-empting regular programming to air a piece of political propaganda is something that would have been more at home in the old Iron Curtain countries. When large companies control the airwaves, we get propaganda that serves the political views of those who own those companies (generally biased toward the right) rather than factual news. It is also important that we have programming that is relevant to the immediate areas where we live, and substantive news about issues that matter, rather than something produced at "News Central" far away and political hit pieces.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.